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only employed when three or four children have died in previous years and the mother is in the state of destitution called *kutumba*. (Chap. II.)

The ntehe is arranged in such a way that the legs of the animal are used as straps, the forelegs are tied around the neck, the hindlegs around the waist and the child is in that way held well against his mother's shoulders. He can either show his head outside his ntehe or be entirely covered by it. This way of carrying babies is very convenient : mother and child get so accustomed to it that a baby, when you lift it, stretches out its legs at once at right angles with its body in order to sit on its mother's back ; and the mother can easily do all her work, even till her fields with the baby on her back in its ntehe !

2) The diet during the nursing period.

The child is nursed by the mother. He is allowed to take the breast at any time. There is nothing like a diet regulation amongst Natives and they would deem it cruelty to refuse the breast to a crying child.

There are some customs relating to the *milk*. When a mother has to leave her child for a short time, she squeezes a few drops of her milk on his neck in order to prevent him feeling thirsty. When she has been absent for more than one day (this can only happen when the child is able to eat some solid food) and returns home, before nursing the child again she heats a bit of broken pot in the fire and squeezes into it a little milk from each breast. The liquid evaporates. The reason of the custom is this : the mother's milk has grown cold ; it must be warmed again ; otherwise the child will be constipated. This is a taboo (1). When a baby bites the teat, it is regarded as naughtiness and the mother scratches its forehead as a punishment.

Mothers not having enough milk use a kind of shrub called

(1) Compare with the Zulu milk charms described by D. Kidd, *Savage Childhood*, page 38.

neta as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to make a child grow : *Ñwana a kula hi miri, the child grows by medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntehe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours, who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

(1) Tjako-tjako, the fontanelle, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's diseases and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanelle to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa mphilo).

851 a grown up child (1). The expression *fuya ñwana* confirms our explanation. This custom is not a protective rite : the physician has nothing to do with it ; it is really an act by which the new-born child becomes a regular member of the community. The strict prohibition of renewed conception before this rite has been accomplished is evidently dictated by the feeling that another child must not appear before this one has been duly received into the family.

6) The weaning.

862 856 A whole year, even more, will elapse after the *boha puri* before the little one can be weaned. He will learn to speak and to walk, and it is only when his intelligence is sufficiently developed to allow him to run small errands that the date of the weaning will be fixed. When his parents can send him to the next hut to ask for snuff and see him coming back holding the tobacco, they say : "Now the time has come !"

The rite of weaning is accomplished in the following manner in Nondwane. (Mboza).

862 824 First of all, the father looks for a young *ntjopfa* tree which has only one root. The ntjopfa is an anonacea bush, which colonists sometimes call the wild custard. (Its fruit is very much like custard fruit and it is said that the true cultivated custard can be grafted on it). The root of this tree is said to have the property of making people forget. The mother cooks a pot of Kafir corn in which she has put the medicine. This 862 will help the child to forget the breast. But the great act is the 782 *hondlola* which takes place under the direction of the physician. 765 The mother pounds some mealies, pours water on them and adds some leaven ; in this way she makes a little light beer (buputju). She keeps a little of the bran of the pounded mealies. The doctor comes, kills a chicken and sprinkles this bran with the blood and *hahla*, viz. offers a regular sacrifice. He prays to the spirits of his own family and asks those of the child's family to

(1) This word *khunji* is also employed to designate boys who have not yet gone through the circumcision school. *Bukhuna* is the despicable state of uncircumcision. The state of a child before the ceremony of *boha puri* is another kind of bukhuna.

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881 304 177 is the old Thonga custom, and has been preserved by the women in its original form, at least amongst the Ba-Ronga ; they frequently pass a ring through the small opening thus produced. The second was practised by the Zulu-Ngonis, and was adopted by the Thonga men in order to resemble their conquerors. The result is an ugly hole. This is not a law imposed by the chief ; it is however universally observed. When a lad does not pierce his ears, his comrades mock him, saying. " U toya ! " " You are a coward ! We shall put a spoonful of porridge in this big ear of yours ! " (Viz. It will hold food because it is not pierced !)

881 304 824 833 The operation is performed in the winter by a man who knows how to do it. Before it is begun, the boy bites the *ndjao*, the root of a kind of juncus which is considered the best means of strengthening the virile force. The doctor introduces into the hole a small piece of reed ; he takes it out every day to wash the wound and puts it in again to keep the hole open. As long as the ear is not healed, the lad must eat his food without salt : he must not go about in the kraals and partake of the porridge of other people, because this food might have been prepared by women having intercourse with their husbands (ba ku khila) and this would make him very ill (1). He must also keep away from girls. When he is healed, he takes away the piece of hard reed and replaces it by a pretty white object.

304 178 Some Thongas tatoo themselves, or used to do so formerly, but this custom is disappearing and is now preserved only by women. We shall describe it in the chapter on the evolution of the woman, as well as the *hleta* custom, the pointing of the teeth.

It is probable that in former times the taboo character of these various ceremonies was more marked that now. At present they are merely a *shihila sha tiko*, a custom of the country.

(1) This alimentary taboo, as well as the interdiction of sexual relations, were of intercourse with married people, clearly shows that the piercing of the ears is a ritual passage. (p. 74).

765 783 761 834 829 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected : one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 783 [824] Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a *ndjao*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

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765 the headman of a large village in the Shifimbatlelo district (18 miles North of Lourenço Marques). His son Mugwanu had been chosen to take his place, but Manyibane had a younger brother, called Fenis, who had taken care of the village in the meantime. All the relatives were assembled. Groups were formed under all the trees. At 4. 30 p. m. the men began to gather near the old black-roofed hut ; one of them, an elderly man, took between [324] his teeth a piece of a root of a special juncus, called *sungi*, bit off a little of it and, after having chewed this substance, rubbed both his legs with it (evidently to find courage and strength for the work he was undertaking) and penetrated into the old hut. He came back bringing with him a dozen beautiful white eggs!.. The hen did not know that the habitation of the deceased was a tabooed grave, and had laid her eggs in this convenient refuge! Then all the men approached and began to pull out the poles of the wall, digging on both sides of each pole ; some of them lifted the roof so as to make room enough for the poles to be pulled out. This work was accomplished with great care ; the earth was carefully placed in a pot and slowly poured out some distance away ; the poles were gently laid down in front of the entrance, on the top of the door, which had been previously placed there, thus forming a regular heap. These precautions are taken out of respect for the deceased. It would be an insult to him to do otherwise, and a relation guilty of such an offence "would at once be seized by colic, the disease of the wolves (masule)." Some boys, clad in European dress, threw the poles violently on the ground. Spoon laughed : "They know the *shilungo*, the ways of the White men," he said. "They have lost their respect!"

765 342 When all the poles were removed and there remained only the reeds of the wall, the men jumped on the roof. The roof is a big conical basket made of sticks tied together and covered with grass. It at once sank down under their weight. But they wished to flatten the cone, to crush it down to the level of the 765 soil. Therefore some of the men pulled the sticks out of the roof to lessen the resistance ; some kicked it in order to break the sticks. They could not succeed ; the cone was still there more or

animals are taboo for girls : the *hare* because it is too cunning ; and the antelope *nhlengane*. This antelope raises the foot when it hears a noise ; hence the idea that its leg is hollow and that it perceives the sound through it. The child would do the same, if its mother were to eat the meat of the nhlengane. It would be unable to hear with its ears, only with its hands!

The *legs* of fowls (tibias) are also taboo for all women, because the hen scatters the sand... So are the *hoofs of oxen*, and *pigs' feet*. A woman eating them would walk too much... She would go everywhere to look for husbands!

It is taboo for a girl to *walk amongst pumpkin plants* (maranga), to pluck the fruits. She is only allowed to pluck those which can be reached from outside. Were she to transgress this law, she would emit a bad odour, and no boy would court her. Her mother, having no fear of being despised, can walk amongst the pumpkins. A second taboo relative to pumpkins is this : unmarried women must cut a "pumpkin nose" (nhompfu) viz. the end of the stem, and fix it at their waist when plucking the pumpkins, lest they get abcesses in certain regions of their body.

It is taboo for them to eat cooked *oxen blood* (bubendje). The following taboos apply also to *married women*. They are not allowed to eat what is called *nkopfu*, viz. some parts of the bowels which are cooked together with the stomach of the ox. "It would spoil the child inside." The *testicles*, which are generally given to the uterine nephew when the meat is distributed according to the laws, and the *underlip* of any animal are also forbidden to them. So is also the *tongue*... because it is reserved for old people as a mark of respect! The *rectum* (gobana) is taboo for women and children. Children might make unseemly noises from the rectum! Women must abstain from *porcupine* and *monkeys' flesh* ; all their offspring would resemble these animals. Such cases have happened, it is said! Women must not eat *eggs* ; they would run a double danger : their child might be born bald and remain so ; or they might be like a hen, which runs in all directions when laying an egg. They would have no peace in child bearing! (See also page 101.)

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must not *approach the*

361 231 337 343 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which 361 824 782 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village. The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the 351 main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 595 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 343 351 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.

596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has 361 574 783 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

621 10) Having closed the village in this way, she *performs a sacrifice*.
595 She sips a mouthful of water from a tumbler, spitting out a
782 portion of it (phahla) towards the people ; then she washes her hands, and throws a little of the water towards them in order *to give them* the village. This act is accompanied by the following words : "Be not tied by the village! Bring forth children ; live and be happy and get everything. You gods, see! I have no bitterness in my heart. It is pure. I was angry because my husband abandoned me, he said I was not his wife ; he loved his younger wives. Now, this is finished in my heart. We shall have friendly relations together..." The prayer being concluded, the headman goes to the main entrance, pushes the thorny branch aside, and opens the village.

621 11) The last act is the *khangula*, the *inauguration ceremony*.
574 Beer is prepared, neighbours are invited and they all drink together, the neighbours coming *to see the new village* (ku bona muti).

As regards the old one, when the moving has been accomplished through the back door widened for the purpose, one of the inhabitants closes the main entrance with a branch. Hence comes the expression which is applied to a village all of whose inmates have died, and which has, on that account, disappeared : "Those people have all died and there was not even one left to close the gate."

II. *In the Ba-Ronga Clans.*

621 The sequence of rites for the removal of a village is very
787 much the same as in the Northern clans.
824 1) The headman examines some spots and consults the bones :
765 "Must I built at such and such a tree ?"

2) When the tree has been designated, he goes to it and places at its foot his furniture (nyundju) and his instrument of worship, his altar, (a pot, a jar, see Part VI). The altar may be placed at the main entrance later on, if the bones so order it. As already mentioned, there will be a mystic relation between him and that tree. He must never cut it down. If any of the branches should be

621 824 765 troublesome and he should wish to remove them, he must ask some one else to do it. On the day of his death, or rather when his hut is crushed down, a branch of that tree will be put on the place where the threshhold was, and another used to close the main entrance of the village, a new entrance being then made through the fence and used as the gate during the rest of the mourning period.

621 833 3) He has sexual relations on the new spot on the first night with his principal wife ; in this way he will *fuya muri*, viz. "possess this tree," and also *fuya muti*, "possess the village." The Ronga *fuya* corresponds here also to the *boha* of the Northern clans (Compare boha puri and fuya ñwana, page 57). If someone precedes him in sexual intercourse, he is guilty ; he has "preceded the village" (rangela muti). By this act the headman has definitely left the old village. The others can go back to it to fetch what remains ; for him it is taboo.

621 831 834 342 4) The same day, all the inhabitants come and move all the roofs, if it is possible to do this in one day. One hut is rapidly built to afford shelter to the inhabitants, in case of rain. The first roof to be transported is that of the hut of the principal wife. This is also done to the accompaniment of obscene songs. These songs are not allowed when only one hut is transported, which may happen when some one goes to live in another village.

It is definitely a custom which goes with the moving of a whole village.

5) The following day two huts are erected, one for the men, the other for the women, because they must not sleep together. "They are still in the bush ; it is buhlapfa ; the village is not yet firm." Those who break this law cause injury to the headman. The bones will soon reveal that "he has been preceded as regards the village ; (a rangeliwile muti)." All the huts are smeared twice ; the women begin to sleep in them, but not the men. The fence and the main entrance must first be prepared.

621 789 6) The *main entrance* (mharana). The men pull up the grass all the way from the back hut to the place where the main entrance must be, so as to make a road all through the village. All the dried plants weeded out during this operation are carefully

621 gathered in a heap. The headman, on the advice of the medicine
T89 man, cuts from certain very vigorous trees such as the nkanye
824 and the ntjondjo, two branches which can live when transplanted. He digs holes on both sides of the entrance and puts the branches into them. Across the gateway, he buries a third branch of the ntjopfa tree, "which causes oblivion" (p. 58): this will be smeared with special drugs in order to increase its efficacy ; it is intended to prevent the baloyi, witches and people speaking bad words. (lit "with bad lips"), from thinking about the village and spoiling it.

621 7) On the evening of that day, the headman and his principal
833 wife have intercourse in their hut and, at dawn, while it is still
789 dark, they go and wash their hands at the main entrance. Mboza does not say that all the other couples must do the same, or trample on the spot. In Nondwane this is sufficient and the rite does not apply to the other couples. But at Manyisa, midway between Lourenço Marques and Khosen, where the Djonga customs are sometimes met with, all the couples must have relations, one after the other, according to order of precedence. It is deemed so important to keep the due order in this "giving to each other the right of resuming sexual life" that, should an elder brother have been absent when the village moved, on his return he must undergo a special treatment in a neighbouring village, during a few days, to avoid any bad consequences resulting from having been unlawfully "preceded" (rangeliwa).

621 8) After the night during which this sexual rite has taken
789 place, at daybreak, all the dried grass is piled in front of the
782 main hut and burnt ritually. The headman throws into the fire a special medicinal pill in order to *give the village over* to his
756 people (nyiketa muti). They all warm their bodies at the blaze, and go and set fire to all the other heaps of dried grass which they made when clearing the soil.

9) The medicine man comes on that same day, and sprinkles the fence with his drugs, in order to protect the village against bush fires, wizards and disease. He walks all round the fence saying : "Happy village! May misfortune not enter here! These are my drugs!" — He starts from one of the poles of the main

789 of most people! This honey comes from below. It is a hidden,
823 a mysterious thing. A little of it is added to the drug and the
787 mixture is poured into a double horn, viz., two horns whose large
ends are firmly fixed to each other, the point where they meet being carefully covered with dung, which acts as glue. A hole has been made in the upper horn and the drug is introduced through this. It is a great means of divination. When war is imminent, the nyokwekulu begins to ferment, and exudes through the hole: "It knows all about war." So the country can prepare for it. No wonder that this powerful medicine is preserved with superstitious awe and the greatest care.

643 A place of honour is reserved for the magical horn in the
345 hut of the first wife of the chief. In the middle of the hearth
372 a perpetual fire burns; it must never be allowed to go out; it
824 is taboo. The wood used for it must be that of a tree found
on the sea shore, and called ntjobori. The Makaneta sub-clan must furnish it regularly. It is taboo to take embers from this fireplace, which is called the royal fire, the medicinal fire (ndjilo wa buhosi, wa muri). Should the principal wife let the fire go out, then Godlela must be called on to light it again, rubbing together two sticks of a shrub called ntjopfa. The fire produced by burning this shrub is considered dangerous. It is taboo to cut its branches or to use them for the purpose of warming oneself; the genitalia are said to swell when this law is transgressed (See Part IV). But Godlela does not fear; has he not his drugs to protect himself? He can and must use ntjopfa to re-light the nyokwekulu fire, and he will be given a good reward for his work! The ntjobori, in burning, produces an abundant smoke which leaves a deposit on the horn, on the forked branch and on all the calabashes containing the provision of powder.

643 The queen Mimpanyanhoba who was in charge of the
372 nyokwekulu had no sexual relations with the chief on that account.
595 I do not know if absolute continence is always enforced on the
784 keeper of the sacred fire, as was the case for the Roman Vestal Virgins. But I have been told by Mboza that this woman prevented her co-wives from coming near her hut; it was taboo.

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262 643 609 796 even those who are settled in the clan. They have their own medicine and luma for themselves, though they must not do it before the chief of the country.

III. *The luma of bukanye and the great national feast.*

137 273 796 824 The most characteristic of all these ceremonies connected with the first fruits is the luma of bukanyi. Tobane has given me a circumstantial description of this feast and it deserves to be reproduced in all its details, as being a typical manifestation of Bantu national life.

The *nkanye* (1) is a large tree, one of the finest in the country. Its botanical name is Sclerocarya caffra (Sond); it is generally known amongst the English of Natal as the Kafir plum.

It bears fruit of the size of a greengage, which when ripe is a beautiful golden yellow and has a strong flavour of turpentine and a penetrating odour. It is a dioecian tree, the male bearing bunches of flowers while the female has single flowers. The Natives are quite aware of this; they cut down the male plants but take care to keep a few in each district to fecundate the female. The fruit — the kanye — begins to ripen in the month of January and falls to the ground. The odour is perceptible everywhere, and it is then that the principal men of the country approach the chief and say to him: "The time has come to luma."

In the luma of the bukanye it is easy to discover four consecutive ceremonies:

a) The luma of the gods and of the chief.

262 782 273 796 The first ripe makanye are gathered and pressed at the capital, and the sour liquor thus obtained is poured out on the tomb of the deceased chiefs in the sacred wood; they are invoked to bless this new year and the feast which is about to be celebrated.

(1) Nkanye, plural minkanye, is the tree in question. Kanye, plural makanye, is the fruit of this tree; bukanye is the drink made from this fruit. In the same way the wild apricot tree is called mphimbi, plural mimphimbi. The fruit himbi, plural mahimbi; the drink made from the fruit, buhimbi.

682 627 procedure. They are in advance of many tribes. The same cannot be asserted when dealing with witchcraft!

Witchcraft (Buloyi). To the Thonga mind this is one of the 754 greatest crimes which a man can commit. It is equivalent to 683 assassination, even worse than murder, as a dim idea of anthro- 787 pophagy is added to the simple charge of killing. A wizard 694 kills human beings to eat their flesh. We shall study the conceptions of *buloyi* later on (Part VI) from a psychological point of view. Here it is mentioned only in as far as it gives rise to judicial cases. This particular crime being committed in great secrecy during the night, and in most instances even unconsciously, the Bantu tribunal uses two or three magical methods for discovering it. These *methods of inquiry*, which civilised nations have long ago abandoned, are :

1) *Divination by casting lots*. The objects used in our tribe for this purpose are the magic bones, the astragalus of goats, antelopes, etc, and shells, which I intend to study in a special chapter. When they have designated (ku ba, to beat) the wizard or witch (noyi) who has killed such and such a person, they are consulted a second time. If they confirm their verdict, the relatives of the deceased go to the chief and lodge their complaint. The accusation becomes official and is now in the hands of the tribunal.

2) The chief sends the plaintiff and accused to the magician who proceeds to the *divination by questioning* them and working himself up into an ecstatic condition (vumisa).

683 695 824 787 754 3) Should the accused be again designated and should he deny his crime, he may request to be submitted to the *ordeal*, viz, the trial by the solaneous plant called mondjo. If the drug intoxicates him, his guilt is confirmed for the third time and the tribunal will condemn him. The punishment for *buloyi* is death, either by hanging, or by empaling, or by drowning in the river, if the wizard was in the habit of perpetrating his murders by sending crocodiles to kill his victims.

[177 681] Nowadays Native chiefs dare not put to death suspected witches. Since the Ba-Ronga have been under the jurisdiction of the Whites, the *death penalty* has been abolished. On the other hand, under

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726 on the town of the 14th October 1894 ; also prior to the ambuscade
789 in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, on the 7th January 1895,
751 and before the battle of Morakwen, the 2nd February following. According to my informant, the chief doctor of the army prepared the medicine in a huge dish with leaves and roots cut into slices. These ingredients possessed an effervescent quality ; the medicine-man stirred up the decoction and with it sprinkled the whole army formed in a circle. After this every warrior was fully persuaded that he was invulnerable, that the bullets would be deflected on either side of him, or, even should they hit him, they would be flattened against his body and fall harmless to the ground. The charm could only be broken by the warrior turning his back to the foe. Then the bullets might pass through him. I have met with very intelligent Natives who were perfectly convinced of this fact, although open to reasonable argument on all other points. They told me that certain Natives who were bowled over by grapeshot, picked themselves up after the fight, came to life again, or rather regained consciousness and then, with their fingers, extracted the bullets, which had all remained imbedded in the skin!

A *Nondwane* warrior described to me, in the following terms, the administering of the magic potion, as it was done on the 7th January 1895 before the battle of Morakwen. The whole army was assembled at Nkanyen, on the bank of the Nkomati. It was there that the magician prepared the medicine, with two young girls as assistants. While he was brewing the mixture and making it froth, the soldiers, formed in a semi-circle, looked on, standing erect, poising their assagais on a level with their
726 heads. Then a *ntjhopfa* was cut down (the shrub of oblivion,
789 often employed by Native doctors and of which we have already
751 noted the use in other ceremonials) and a branch laid across the
824 road. The several battalions were called up, one after the other, and every man had to jump over the branch and take a mouthful of the medicine, which he spat out again, pronouncing the sacramental *tsu* which accompanies the offerings made to the gods : he subsequently went off, running and dancing and getting ready to go forth and kill. When each one had taken his share of the medicine and it was all finished, the doctor said to them : "Now I

244 being of every day use in the Thonga culinary art, in which it provides the fatty principles. This curious Papillonacea, after having blossomed, elongates the peduncle of the flower, which enters the ground, and the seed grows in the soil, well protected against the rays of the sun. Its taste is delicious, either prepared
[754] as a sauce to season mealie flour, or roasted. When there are no nuts inside the shells, which often happens, Thongas call the empty shells *mabvobo*. They say: "The ground nuts have refused" — "Ma yalile marumane." But this is a euphemism. They mean that the *baloyi*, the wizards, have refused to let them grow or, rather, have stolen them from their shells during the night (See Part VI).

244 824 *b)* Another Leguminosa frequently cultivated is the *nyume* (yi-tin (Ro.), *ndlowu*, yi-tin, (Dj.), the *Kafir pea*. This also grows in the earth, like the ground nut. It is much coarser than the European pea, but is twice or three times as large and very nourishing. This vegetable is subject to very curious taboos amongst the Rongas. Whilst all other seeds are sown in one and the same garden, this must be planted in a separate patch, and the tinyume field must be shut off from the others by a fence of thorns. Men
[753] are allowed to plant them, but, as soon as they have grown a little, only women can enter the field. Should a man imprudently do so, he would transgress a severe taboo. The danger is twofold: firstly the man himself would be punished; he would get a hydrocele. But the owners of the field would also suffer: the crops would fail. They would reproach the transgressor with these words: "You have taken away (hungula) the strength of our peas!" In order to prevent any such mischance, the husband of the woman who owns the field goes and treats (daha) it in the following manner: he throws his assagay across the field, in the direction of the four cardinal points. Then the danger is removed and men can pass through the plot. It might be supposed that this taboo was of the same kind as that which rested on bananas, for instance, when they were still new in the country and feared on that account. But it would not seem that the Kafir pea is a recent innovation in Thonga agriculture. It has been known for a long time. Another taboo in connection with Kafir peas is this:

during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them. 244 824

Amongst the Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) The Kafir bean, mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.), is a small round brownish seed, with a pleasant flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it. 244

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the food of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief articles of diet of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds : the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilatana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (djima), huge water melons, with white or pink pulp and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes. (See I. p. 50.) 415 824

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga*, which seems to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantus (1). We have seen (I. p. 184) that girls are not allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously observed that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his 244 753 824

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *langa* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Tsewend, *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages*, p. 89.

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*. 252 303

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), Vangueria infausta, a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii.) In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer. 137 222

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruit similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruits are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

* * *

There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut down a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree, nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen. 782 824

will call her on the day they begin to sow, and she will have to sow the first seed; thus she will prevent all the seeds from "burning." 241 784

But the most stringent taboos are connected with the *threshing of the cereals*. This work is exclusively done by women, and it is taboo for the men to approach the threshing floor. The Makanetas, who cultivate rice extensively, cut the ears and pile them into heaps in their own huts and not on the threshing floor. When the grain is dry, they thresh it by trampling on it. Should any woman pass by, it is taboo to speak to her. If she enters the hut and helps for a little while with the work, then the taboo is removed and you, the owners of the rice, can talk to her. — "Should you do so without that condition being fulfilled, this person would *take your rice* and leave you nothing but the husks (mataha). Should a relative, dwelling in the neighbouring district, come and see you whilst you are threshing rice, don't give her any part of your harvest: let her crush it in the mortar and take it away husked, lest you lose all your grain and keep the husks only! The husks of the rice which you give to your relative must remain with you." (Mboza). The same applies to Kafir corn. To allow a relative from outside to pluck ears from your garden, to thresh them and take them home means to "spoil your corn" (onha mabele). When you are threshing Kafir corn, let the visitor first take the pestle and help you before you speak to her.

As regards *tree culture*, it was formerly considered a taboo to plant foreign kinds, such as bananas, oranges, etc. When Mboza planted the first mango trees in Morakwen, people told him: "You will die! You have called misfortune on yourself (u tihlolele), and other people will eat your fruit!" I heard this taboo explained in Shiluvane as follows. When a man has been obliged to move, and leaves trees planted by him in his old village, people passing near the ruins shake their heads and say: "Look at those trees! They have chased away the master of the village." These two testimonies are interesting, and fitly illustrate the origin of a taboo. The desolation of a ruin has been connected with the presence of new trees, as they have often been noticed together. Hence the idea that the trees are 245 784 824

245 the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently
784 a taboo! Nowadays however, this superstition has died out,
824 and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon (1), and pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

[351] Natives do not generally fence their gardens. Stealing is
685 therefore very easy and it is no wonder that they have recourse to
789 magical means to protect themselves. Here are some of them; they are characteristic instances of Bantu magic.

The *rihehlo*. This consists of a kind of mysterious influence exerted on the thief by throwing a magical powder into his footprints or by taking a little of the earth found in these footprints and treating it with the drugs. The inhabitants of the village where the thief lives will be seized by disease; this will induce them to come to the owners of the garden to confess their fault and pay a fine. Then the magician who had furnished the drug will give them a counter-drug and they will be healed! Amongst the Pedis, the magician anoints with his drugs the stem from which a cob has been stolen. Then the thief will feel intolerable suffering in his little finger and come to the village of the people whom he has robbed crying: "I have stolen!" He pays the fine, receives in exchange the counter-drug and the pain ceases! (Spelonken)

The tinhlamalala. This is the name of the central nervules of the leaves of the Hyphaene palm tree. They are like little snakes, very slender, and flexible. To make the resemblance still greater, the owner of a field makes a knot at the extremity of the rod: this represents the head of the snake. Then he looks for the dried skin which has been cast off by a real snake; he reduces this to ashes, makes a powder with these ashes and anoints the rods. He weaves the rods together to form a kind of crown and places it on one of the mealies stems in his garden. When the thief

137 (1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also may be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemon Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

202 618 crocodiles.) For the Mavundjas: *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha!* (The big mountain, difficult to climb.) (1)

224 643 825 845 I have already described the part of a slain animal which is to be given to the chief, when speaking of the prerogatives of the master of the country (I. p. 406). Here are some supplementary details: The general idea is that he must receive that part of the body which was in contact with the soil, because the chief is the owner of the soil. In the case of smaller antelopes however he does not claim anything. For the eland he requires, in addition to the ordinary tribute, half of the *bofu* i. e. of the paunch of fat which is found round the heart of this animal and which is believed to possess precious medicinal properties (especially for new-born children born with a membrane round the head). As regards buffaloes and other big animals, should they be killed far away from home, their meat is cut into strips (mishakatsu) and two bundles are brought back to the chief; it is also the rule that the head of any beast of great size should be eaten on the bandla, the meeting-place of the men in the capital.

224 643

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

224 824 So far I have described hunting with assegais, sticks and dogs. But Thongas possess another method of killing big animals, a method which is perhaps more ancient and which has sometimes proved very useful. This is the *marindji trap*, i. e. a large pit dug in the earth, covered with branches and full of pointed stakes upon which the animal falls and impales itself. These stakes are made

(1) The Pedis have the same custom. The Ba-Khaha cry: "Haratsha! Mugoai! We"! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaha clan is said to have been held back in its ancient migrations by a swollen river and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedis say: *'Sioandja khomo*," viz., "the killer will be given an ox for his reward."

224 of the very hard wood of the ntjenga tree, a sort of mimosa shrub,
824 and are anointed with a powder called *tjulu*. This is a deadly poison ; it is obtained from a shrub which has very pretty flowers and grows abundantly in the forests near the sea, the Strophanthus petersianus. Should an elephant fall into the game pit and succeed in escaping, it will soon die from the poisoned wound.

The marindji trap was already known to the Honwanas, three or four centuries ago, before they possessed any iron weapon. They used to kill elephants in this way and, being unable to dismember them, they made a fire all round the beast to cook it on the spot!

224 In order "to make the game forget," viz., to circumvent its
844 wariness (djibata), certain magical charms are used in connection with the trap. The fence which surrounds it is smeared over with a powder made from a human placenta. A hunter's wife carefully preserves the afterbirth of her child ; she bakes it on the evening of the day of delivery, hides it during the following day, dries it the next evening, puts it between two pieces of a broken pot, and hangs it from the roof. When the father returns from his hunting trip, he makes a powder of it, mixes it with other drugs, and uses it to smear the fence of the trap, also his arrows, or his gun. Should an antelope be wounded by a projectile covered with this drug, it is sure to fall at once! This powerful medicine is called *ndzedzena* and is deemed so important that a hunter's wife who loses the afterbirth must pay a fine of one hoe ; the hunter will try to obtain the placenta of another woman ; it is therefore not necessary that the afterbirth be that of his own wife (Viguet).

224 Game pits are not common in Thongaland ; they were still used
476 some years ago in the South of the Maputju country and in the Hlengwe territory, but I never came across any myself. At a more remote period they were employed for the most profitable collective hunting the Thongas ever attempted. All the members of the clan were summoned ; they built a strong fence as much as two kilometers in length, leaving about ten openings at equal distances ; at each of these gates was dug a game pit. In the afternoon the men assembled and prepared torches which they lighted in the evening ; and with loud shouts they chased the game

towards the fence into the pits. My informant asserts that the result was sometimes marvellous ; the pits were soon full and the animals coming behind ran over their comrades and escaped ; the men followed closely and stabbed the antelopes in the neck.. But this of course meant the wholesale destruction of game. Happily a stop has been put to this kind of hunting. 224 476

Nowadays Natives use *iron traps* which they buy in the European stores, some of which are quite sufficiently strong to catch a duiker or a wild pig. They smear them with another charm, the *butiba*, a kind of brownish moss growing on the roots of a tree called shivumbunkanye. It also is said to have the power of "making the game forget." 224 824

I have described some other traps when dealing with boys' games.

Everybody was allowed to hunt in the good old times when the White authorities had not yet introduced so many restrictive regulations. Ordinary hunters are called bahloti or bazingeli (Zulu term). But there were others who had made a kind of trade of hunting, regular, professional hunters, who were called *phisa* (pl. maphisa). They were not satisfied to kill an occasional antelope near their village, but they undertook big expeditions to the great deserts of the Hlengwe country where game was plentiful and where the most precious of all, i. e., elephants, abounded. It cannot be said that the maphisa formed a definite class in the tribe like the bone-throwers, for instance. I never heard of a true initiation taking place prior to their becoming maphisa. Yet they were known and recognized as a kind of superior caste and were very proud of their name of maphisa. They claimed a special power over big game owing to the mysterious rites which they practised; thus they partook more or less of the nature of magicians. I have come across some of them and heard marvellous stories about others. Old Madyashikulu of the Nhlongo clan, whom I met in the Ntimane country, near Antioka, boasted that he could pick out an elephant in a herd and force it to come and fall down at the foot of the tree up which he had climbed. He had then only to stab it from his retreat, and kill it ; after which he came down from the tree to 224 554 791

shorter sticks, which are pushed in here and there as the building proceeds, and the architect ends by obtaining a sort of enormous, pointed hat lying on its apex, all the branches and sticks composing it being solidly tied together with strips of a very resistant bark, that of the bulolo Hibiscus (p. 33) or of other trees. It is now only necessary to turn the big cone over, and place it on a wall, and there you have the typical Thonga hut. 335 342

The *wall* is built with stakes, about four feet in length above the ground, planted at intervals along the circumference of a circle which the architect traces with wonderful accuracy in the sand. He then takes two flexible branches and fastens them to the stakes, at a height of one foot above the ground, the whole way round the wall, one on the inside, the other on the outside. Between these branches and in the spaces from stake to stake are inserted reeds of the same height, completing the wall : the reeds are firmly fastened to the supporting branches by a band passing alternately over and underneath them. The same operation is repeated half way up the wall (two feet above the ground), and again at three quarters of the height (three feet). The wall is now ready to put on its large conical hat, which will fit it perfectly : a cone on a cylinder!

Placing the roof in position (ku tlakula yindlu), the next procedure, requires the display of considerable muscular energy. All the men of the village are convened for the job : their strong arms raise the monumental basket and place it triumphantly on the wall. Beer is then given to the helpers, and a little jollification ensues ; the equivalent of the "fête du petit sapin enrubanné" which the carpenters celebrate in Switzerland when they have completed the roof of a house. 342 476

The roof must now be *covered* (fulela) *with a thatch* (byanyi) to make it impermeable to the heavy rains of the wet season, and it is here that considerable ingenuity is displayed in the method adopted. The Thonga pulls up by the roots, in the low lands on the borders of the lakes, a kind of very wide grass (luhlwa), which attains a height of one and a half to two feet : this he separates into small bunches which he lays side by side on the ground and ties together, one by one, with his 342 [824]

C. UTENSILS.

Nature, which has provided the Ba-Ronga with skins of animals for clothing, and with poles, reeds, grasses and fibrous barks for their habitations, has also favoured them with several exceedingly useful trees of which they have not been slow to take advantage. Of these the most valuable is the *milala* palm, *(Hyphaene crinita)* used for nearly all basket-work ; next comes the *nkuhlu (Trichilia emetica)* whose wood is particularly serviceable for all descriptions of carving. She has also deposited in their plains beds of clay, of more or less desirable quality, which they use for making pottery. I shall begin with the latter. 824

I. *Pottery.*

An excellent clay is to be found at Shibindji, in the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, a district close to Morakwen, and the people of this place — they are the same who abstain from eating any animal liver (I. p. 364) — are the potters who supply the whole country. They are said to be the masters (benyi) of the art. But clay is found in many other places, in Shifukundju, Mpatshiki, etc. It is said that the clay of Muweri, near Lemon Island, on the Lower Nkomati, is even better than that of Shibindji. So the art of the potter does not belong to a single family, and is not hereditary. Any one may learn it and practise it. Pottery amongst the Thongas is essentially woman's province. Is this because earthenware utensils are principally used in the kitchen, where woman's sway is paramount and indisputed? Possibly ; in any case it is so. 134 323 323

Let us suppose then that the mother of a family wishes to renew, or to add to her stocks of pots, large and small. She starts out for the marshes, picks up in the well-known hollow several clods of clay and returns to the village carrying them on her head. No one salutes her : everyone pretends not to see her, 323 777

821 which had caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to
825 the mountains. The magician who understands the "treatment
791 of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot ; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name Mudjumi ; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it is used in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body ; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

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The flute of Heaven.
Drawn by J. Weare.

Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at length. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird ; the wax substance was made from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky bean" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven.

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi, edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 784 824 789 133 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross, and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 769 776 782 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits, but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa, ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 49). 823

Metals known to the tribe before the coming of the Whites were few. (See page 137). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold. 135

V. *The Vegetable World. Thonga Botany.*

While Bantus possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, Geography, Mineralogy, etc., while their ideas in these domains are in no way deserving of the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation. 815

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in a herbarium which I sent many years ago for classification to the Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1 s. each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochre-smeared hair, a young one, with a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking slowly, swinging the tails of his belt. This chief, notwithstanding his social rank, showed gross ignorance of botany ; but some of the others knew the name of almost every plant ; had I had a *ñanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I should have obtained 137 124 815 815 756 824

the names of all the specimens of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world.

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied ; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantus distinguish correctly between species, but do not classify species into genera. In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they bring together forms which are sometimes widely different, but which belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names.

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs up the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filicea found in the district of Lourenço Marques ; *gonhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem ; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection, which were called *Nkomptana*, both those with blue flowers, and the yellow ; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All the Strigae, a genus of the Scrophulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so truly present that Thongas distinguish between various species in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a valuable tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots are used to make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlutjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very closely akin to each other.

Cognate species found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjhobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). This is even more striking

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi* ; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
815 earth ; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification : so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu : "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter ; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family ; these three plants have in common small hard leaves : hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by
753 lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire ; its wood is not employed to cook food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

The want of an enlightened botanical sense is further seen in the following fact : three different kinds of Vernonia, though belonging to the same genus, are called by different names, as if the Thongas had altogether failed to perceive their relation. The Vernonia cinerea is called *Ntshontshongori* ; the V. Perotteti, *Nkukulashibuya* (the plant with which one sweeps the threshing floor) ; the V. Tigna, *Hlunguhlungu*. 137

Another case of one and the same name applied to plants of different families having merely an external resemblance is the following : the *Ndjiba* is a Leguminosa tree of large proportions, Apalatoa delagoensis (Schinz), and the *Shindjibana*, viz., the little Ndjiba, is a small shrub with leaves somewhat similar to those of the Ndjiba. Its scientific name is Synaptolepis Oliveriana and it belongs to the Thymeleaceae family.

It is no wonder that the notion of genus, though existant, has not always been correctly and universally applied. Thongas have no idea of the anatomy of plants ; they have never dissected a flower, and are totally ignorant of the presence of male and female elements in it. They know, however, that these sexual differences exist. They have noticed, for instance, amongst the nkanye stems, which are of a dioecious species, that some are male and some female, and they carefully preserve some of the male stems in order to fecundate the female ones ; but they believe that this fecundation takes place through the roots of the trees! 815 824

Thus, when the name of a plant can be explained, we see that, in naming it, *its external characters, or its uses*, have alone been considered. For instance the beautiful yellow Sterculiacea, Melhania Forbesii, is called *Muhlwadambu*, Setting Sun, because its deep colour is similar to that of the sun when dipping below the horizon. A certain plant whose seeds explode when crushed is the *Buputwana*, because, "it says bu-bu-bu." A climbing Composita with juicy stem is the *Kamele*, "the one which is pressed," (kama) to squeeze out its juice, which is said to have a medicinal value. A Euphorbiacea whose fruit is eaten by the partridges (Fluggea obovata) is the *Midyañhwari*, partridges' food. Those named after their uses are, for instance, *Nkukulashibuya*, the one which sweeps the threshing floor (Vernonia Perotteti) ; *Nhlangulaba-* 137 815 824

137 *tjongwana*, the one employed to wipe little children when dirty!
815 (This plant is tomentous and answers well for the purpose);
824 *Psekamafura*, a large tree (Casearia Junodi, Schinz), a tree whose fuel is particularly good for melting mafureira fat (p. 18), etc. The Asparagus bearst he name of *Nkwangulatilo*, the same as that of the rainbow. When asked why this is so, Natives say that it is because the colour of the asparagus leaves resembles that of the rainbow, but another explanation which seems to me more probable is this: it is because this plant is given as a medicine to little children to prevent the roaring of thunder from "tearing out their diaphragm (handjula lipfalo)."

815 The great use of the vegetable world is to provide men with
824 food and medicine. If plants bear names and have been carefully studied by the Bantus this is, in the first place, because they are useful in these two respects. We have already considered Thonga vegetarian food (p. 9-19), and I shall devote some pages to the medical art in Chapter III.

In Appendix II, I give a list of Thonga botanical names with their scientific equivalents. These plants have been identified by Dr. Schinz, who published a flora of Delagoa Bay in the "Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier," No. 10, 1900.

The conclusion reached from this study of Thonga names of plants is that the vegetable world has been the subject of a true and, in a certain sense, scientific observation on their part. Their botanical knowledge can be compared with that of our forefathers of two or three hundred years ago, before Botany became a true science, when plants were still named from their external characteristics, and studied as medicinal herbs; I would even say that this knowledge, though of an inferior type, is more general amongst Thongas than, for instance, amongst the European peasantry; a fact which shows that their powers of observation and scientific study are not inferior to those of other more advanced races.

Do plants play a part in Thonga religion? (1)

000 When travelling through the country, you may come across

(1) The Vendas plant the bulbs of an Amaryllida which they call Lobome near the stone which they use as an altar. See *S. A. Journal of Science*, Vol. XVII, p. 215.

When travelling through the country, you may come across 824
a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious 769
purpose. One's first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, 778
but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably that which the divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should be built, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of those possessed. (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree, and the Thongas call it the king of trees, but it is not so in itself, or in virtue of any Nature spirit dwelling in it ; anybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo ; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mhamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject (I. p. 397), is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such.

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-ku-mila*, things which grow (ku mila), 815
are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana*, or *psihari*, 136
which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*. 825

The knowledge possessed by the Thongas with regard to animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to some which are smaller, insignificant and useless.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake ; leeches, *ntjundju* (mumi) ; lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), both those living in the earth and parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julideae are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma) ; the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a

782 addresses his prayer to his ancestor-gods in order to be delivered
787 from his enemies.

The Offering of a Thorn (Mhamba ya Mutwa). This is also called *ku hahla ka shihlahla*, the sacrifice of the forest. The headman has seen that misfortune has fallen on his village ; all his people die, the village is about to disappear, to become merely a part of the bush. He goes to the forest, picks up a thorn there and accomplishes the religious act by sucking the thorn, and emitting his saliva. Then he returns to the forest and places the thorn where the bones have ordered him.

782 *The Offering of Contempt (Mhamba ya Litsaŋwa).* We have
788 already seen a case in which this offering is made. It is a compo-
824 nent part of the burial ritual (I. p. 142) and we have called it the rite of the twig. But it can be performed on other occasions also. In certain clans (Nkuna-Khosa, Hlengwe) it does not take place at the burial, but is of common use when someone wishes *to avoid contempt*, to be well received by those to whom he goes ; for instance when he goes to his debtors and fears that they may despise him and perhaps refuse to accept his claim, or when a young man goes to woo a girl and is afraid that she may not look favourably on his suit. The religious act is performed as follows. The officiant cuts a twig of the nkanye tree. We have often mentioned this tree, whose fruits are used to prepare the famous bukanye beer ; it is everywhere regarded as the best of trees, and highly valued. It is dioecious, as we have seen (I. p. 397). The twig must come from a female stem, if a man *hahla* for himself, from a male stem if a woman does so. The officiant bites the extremity of the twig till he has drawn a little of the sap into his mouth ; then he emits that sap together with his saliva, and proceeds to his prayer.

789 *The Offering of the Fig Tree (Mhamba ya Hlulawumbe).* This
782 tree is called shihlampfana or hlulawumbe. It frequently grows
824 as a parasite on another tree ; or surrounds it, growing close to its stem, and in this way kills it. If a man has enemies, if there are people who hate him, he digs up a bit of the root of this fig tree and uses it in making his prayer. These troublesome persons will be choked, destroyed, just like the stem close to which the hlulawumbe grows. (Hlulawumbe means to overcome others).

the new year ; we raise our calabashes, so that the new season may not be too difficult for us... This will consolidate our home ; bad coughs will not attack us too severely. It will shut out the wind ; we shall no longer be very ill, because these are new drugs. As regards the old ones, they have been contaminated (khuma) by the misfortunes of last year. They are mad (hungukile). A new rain falls ; let there be also new drugs, and we can undertake our journeys to sell our goods." So the ñanga removed a little of the old powder from each calabash ; he threw this on the path at a crossway ; then he washed the calabashes at the same spot : "Misfortune is thus thrown away. Passers-by will take it with them as it has been thrown out there by us." Then the new powder was added to the remainder of the old, which was "raised" by it.

In order to throw more light on the nature of Mankhelu's art, let me briefly mention *the roots* (rimetju), or *the leaves* (tluka, ri-ma), or, to use the great, the generic name, *the drugs* (muri, mu-mi) which composed the marvellous powder of the calabashes. He was not a man of one drug. He claimed to be a universal physician, so he mixed together all kinds of drugs, being sure that, in this way, they would certainly be effective in any case brought to him. Here is the description given by him.

Ntjebe : that by which we find strength to trample on our enemies ; we trample also on the winds which spoil the mealies ; we drive out the bad cold (or wind) which has come to us and made us cough. (Notice the triple use of this drug).

Shikuku : that which tramples on misfortune.

Mpoñwana wa burisi matuba-tubana : vanquisher of the enemy and of misfortune.

Shinano : that which induces the enemies to sleep ; you hang some leaves of it on your shield and they are overcome by drowsiness, they do not see you coming towards them.

Nembe-nembe. By it you reach your enemy while he still sleeps and kill him before he can defend himself.

Mpetshu wa milomo : that of the lips! It overcomes the curses and the assagais of the others!

Rihinga ra ndlela : a root found on the path ; it helps you to go on, though others may seek to hinder you in your progress.

Shivunge : that which attracts patients to the doctor.

Nandjiyane : that which makes his words agreeable, so that patients will like them ; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari : that which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintebe* (I. p. 479).

Mbendjula : that which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, which Mankhelu uses to cause rain to fall (p. 321).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes ; the military domain is the male domain par excellence : it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do this" (p. 417).

There may be some true scientific elements in Thonga medical practice. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from father to son. Why should there not be effective curative properties in plants of their country just as in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them? However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best, the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint, and only know one drug, are perhaps those most resembling real physicians ; they act on the results of experiment. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or super-

Amongst the first we have already noticed *falling stars* (p. 309) ; 787
the snail (p. 338) : should you meet with it on the road, you will soon hear that one of your relatives has died ; *the stem of cuscuta* (yendje-yendje) ; (1) there are families, however, for which this is not of bad omen, but for other people it foretells misfortune ; *the mbonga bee* belongs to the same class (p. 337) ; the various kinds of *mistletoe* are also of bad omen. So also is the *puff-adder* (p. 340), the *likure* (p. 340), a greyish slender snake : if it blows upon you, or bites you, you will grow thin and turn grey, like the animal itself ; the long-legged bird *shitshinyariendjo* foretells misfortune on the road (I. p. 339) as do also the *buwumati* snake and the *nkangu bird*.

Other objects are of good omen ; the beetle *Eccopteptera* and the *Mutilla* (p. 336), and especially the beetle *Bombolosi*, belonging to the Curculionidae family, a curious insect which drops to the ground and counterfeits death when touched or frightened ; it is the symbol of riches. Natives hang it on a string at their door ; I have heard of others hanging it in their hair ; but in this case it is said to be placed there to eat lice!

All these superstitions are believed in more or less seriously. But, in order to know their fate and what they must do to avoid misfortune, Thongas have recourse to true methods of divination. Amongst these mantic practices some are simple and some more elaborate.

II. *Less important Means of Divination.*

1) Amongst these I may mention first the *pshapsha*, which 524
corresponds to our "drawing lots" and is performed exactly 787
in the same way by placing pieces of grass or sticks of different length between the fingers, and pulling out one of them, having

(1) The cuscuta sometimes covers large patches of ground on the sandy hills of 137
Thongaland ; as is well-known, it has a regular root, but afterwards becomes a parasite 824
on the vegetables to which it attaches itself, whilst its stem and root die. This fact
has been noticed by the Natives, and has given the cuscuta a special value in their 787
eyes. When they happen to find a plant which still retains its stem and root, magicians make use of these, especially in their exorcism rites. But this stem, which is so rare, is a bad omen for ordinary people.